THE CHICANO CAUCUS OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATION OF THE MEXICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE CALIFORNIA POLITICAL SYSTEM

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A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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Statement of Problem

There is a lack of published information in the discipline of political science regarding the role of the Mexican American community in the political affairs of the State of California. As a result, students of government are relatively uninformed about the role and effect of this group on public policy decision-making in the state. The discipline of political science to date has not investigated the effect of Chicano members of the California Legislature and their formation into a legislative caucus, known as the Chicano Caucus.

Sources of Data

In reporting about the Chicano Caucus this thesis drew upon data obtained from personal interviews with the members of the Chicano Caucus, governmental affairs journals, outside the discipline o, political science government publications, newspapers, and personal observations by the thesis writer about the operation of the Legislature. Information on the operation of several other legislative caucuses was obtained from political science literature and newspaper and journal accounts.

Conclusions Reached

The Chicano Caucus is quite similar in its behavior to other legislative caucuses insofar as it functions to protect an identified interest. In this case, the identified interest is the Spanish surnamed population of California. The overall effect of this caucus on policy making in the state appears go be that the caucus is able to undertake and accomplish limited legislative objectives but for the most. part the caucus succeeds better at "protecting" than "advancing" the interests of their client group because of various specified factors. Pertinent factors suggest there may be improvement in the future.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Although Chicanos, or Mexican Americans, comprise approximately 16 percent of the population of the State of California, little has been written in political science and governmental studies literature about the role of this minority in the legislative decision-making process of the state. As a result, students of government are relatively uninformed as to the role and effect of this group on the governmental affairs of the state. This paper intends to report on a major out-growth of Chicano expression in the state's political affairs—the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature.

Among the questions, which are presently unanswered, are: What is the Chicano Caucus? Who are its members? What are its functions? What is its role in the Legislature? And, what effect does it have on the politics and decision-making in general in the state?

Statement of Intent

The intent of this paper is to describe how and under what circumstances the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature came into being, the purpose it serves, and the role it plays in the politics of the

state. The paper then compares this caucus with other legislative caucuses, analyzes how it fits into the state's governmental system, and finally considers what its future role and effect may be.

Methodological Framework

This paper utilizes a combination of pluralist group theory and elite theory as its methodological framework. This thesis writer, in borrowing from pluralist group theory, assumes that public policy generally is a function of the relative strengths of opposing groups plus the institutional interests and role perceptions of the political decision-makers plus the effect of traditions and potential groups. The decision-makers may even play a leading role in initiating new groups or changing the rules of the game used in public policymaking. On some issues, however, this thesis writer perceives that public policy is primarily a function of elite bargaining (e.g., determining the method of taxing multi-national corporations) in conformance with elite theory.

This paper also accepts the assumption that pluralist theory is generally applicable to what determines group success. Pluralist group theory assumes group success is based on many factors. prime among them re : number of adherents, intensity of their commitment, and mastery technique, public relations), combined with the level of their resources legitimacy, wealth, time, and

control over information. This thesis writer modifies the assumption of elite theory that all group success is based primarily on the correspondence between group goals and elite purposes by the assumption that elite purposes are controlling over group goals on particular issues.

This paper is also written with the pluralist proposition that group processes permit a closer achievement to a social optimum in terms of preserving individual liberty and satisfaction of needs, than any other political pattern. Specifically, the attempt to override group pressures through central social planning are presumed to lead to more problems than benefits and rational central planning in this area is a myth. This thesis writer notes and rejects the criticism by elite theory that reliance upon group conflict on issues increases inequities and avoids solutions to problems, thereby allowing them to mount to eventual crisis proportions. This thesis writer agrees various problems are avoided until they reach crisis proportions but disagrees that the delay in solving the problem increases inequities.
Oftentimes the inequity occurs after the policy decision is reached and not while being debated. Furthermore, speedy decision do not mean that inequities will be reduced.

Methodology

This paper obtained its descriptive data from literature in the discipline of political science, from special reports and newspaper accounts, and from a personal survey conducted by this thesis writer of the attitudes of the members of the Chicano Caucus on several public policy issues. In this paper, the comparison of the Chicano Caucus with other groups is derived from political science literature and newspaper and journal accounts. The analysis of the role of the Chicano Caucus and its fit into the state's political system relies on

1) literature from the discipline, 2) periodical articles in government affairs journals and newspapers, 3) the thesis writer's personal survey of attitudes by the Chicano Caucus, and 4) personal observations on how the Legislature in Sacramento functions.

Definitions and Explanation

This paper utilizes the terms "Chicanos" and "Mexican Americans" to refer to persons living in the United States as their permanent home whose origins are Mexico. In this papers the terms “Spanish surnamed persons" and "persons of Spanish origins" refers to persons living in the United States whose origins are any of the countries of Latin America, including Mexico. This paper does not generally use the term 'Spanish speaking persons" because it

doesn’t necessarily identify one's heritage--since a person may be able to speak several languages without being identified with a particular group of people. The term "Hispanic" is generally not used because technically it refers to people from Spain and Portugal, without recognizing the influence of Indian and Latin American cultures.

The only times these two latter terms are used in this paper is in a quote or when used by a particular source.

Although each of the members of the Chicano Caucus is of Mexican heritage, these caucus members stated that they attempt to serve or represent the interests of all the state's Spanish surname population.

Organization of Paper

Chapter 2 of this paper describes several legislative caucuses in the United States Congress and one legislative caucus in the California Legislature. The purpose of this chapter is to develop a basis for comparing the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature.

Chapter 3 describes- the Chicano Caucus, identifies its members, origins, purposes, and functions, and specifies the role this caucus plays in the politics of the state. This chapter is designed to

acquaint the reader with this caucus but not to provide critical comparisons or analyses.

Chapter 4 describes key socio-economic indicators about the people whom the Chicano Caucus represents. Through an identification of the people served, it is hoped that the reader obtains a better understanding of why this caucus was formed.

Chapter 5 reviews the political environment affecting California legislators. The intent of this chapter is to describe the conditions in which the Chicano Caucus operates.

Chapter 6, the concluding chapter, compares the Chicano Caucus with other legislative caucuses, analyzes how this caucus fits into the state's governmental system, identifies factors that either help or hinder the effectiveness of the caucus, and considers what its future role and effect on state politics and public policies may be.

CHAPTER 2

LEGISLATIVE CAUCUSES

Introduction

In Congress there are numerous groupings of senators and representatives that play a significant

role in the legislative process. These groups have bonds of mutual interests and/or personal friendship that significantly influence the functioning of Congress.1 Some groups represent specific interests, such as the Congressional Rural Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus. Other groups, such as the House Democratic Study Group and the House Republican Wednesday Group, focus to a considerable extent on procedural issues as a means of revising the manner in which the business of Congress is performed. Still other groups represent a similar outlook on a particular issue, such as the Members of Congress for Peace through law. In the California Legislature at least five legislative caucuses are known to exist--the Black Caucus, the Chicano Caucus, the Asian Caucus, the Women's Caucus, and the Rural Caucus.

This chapter briefly discusses the role of the following congressional caucuses: the Hispanic Caucus, the Black Caucus, the Democratic and Republican party caucuses, and the House Democratic Study Group. This chapter also briefly reviews the Rural Caucus of the California Legislature.

Hispanic Caucus

In Congress, the legislative caucus named the Hispanic Caucus was formed circa 1975. At its formation, the caucus consisted of the

following six members: Eligio de la Garza, Congressman (Dem - Texas); Henry B. Gonzalez, Congressman (Dem - Texas); Manuel LuJan, Congressman (Rep - New Mexico); Edward R. Roybal, Congressman (Dem - California)Herman Padillo, Congressman (Dem - New York); and Joseph M. Montoya, Senator (Dem - New Mexico); Senator Montoya of New Mexico was defeated in the 1976 general election.

There is no published political science literature which examines the purpose, role, and operations of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Through congressional staff contacts, however, this thesis writer is informed that this caucus has taken stands on legislative issues such as employment training programs for farm workers (as part of the CETA programs) and funding for bilingual education instruction.

Congressional Black Caucus

The Congressional Black Caucus is regarded as the most important group of black officeholders in the country who represent primarily black electoral districts. This caucus has been in existence since at least 1970. The black members of Congress joined together to discuss and act on issues that directly affect black people in the United States. In 1971 there were 13 members in this caucus, of whom

all but three represented districts that were largely black. Today, this caucus is comprised of 16 members.

One way of acting on issues of importance to black people has been for the caucus members to use the caucus as an organization center for congressional action. The caucus, for example, protested the proposed cancellation of the only black educational program broadcast on public television; the Black Journal. In another instance, the caucus members united together and worked with black organizations from throughout the country in successfully opposing the Senate confirmation of Supreme Court nominees Clement Haynsworth and G. Harold Carswell.

The Congressional Black Caucus also places pressure on resistant points in Congress by holding unofficial hearings, issuing press releases, and developing legislation. Since the group represents a national constituency and its members are nearly all from safe districts, the caucus has been able to be quite active in protecting black voters--inside their districts as well as in other members' districts. For example, in 1971 Congressman William Clay of the caucus stated that in the next election campaign the group was going to expose the record of many Congressmen having 35 to 4Q percent black constituencies who consistently vote against the interests of those constituents.

On January 22, 1971, this caucus, after attempting for a year to meet with President Richard Nixon, boycotted his State of the Union address. They did, however, meet with the President later that year in March. The caucus boycotted the State of the Union address because they said publicly that the President was "pitting the rural areas against the cities, the rich against the poor, black against white, and young against old."

In June 1971, the thirteen members of the Congressional Black Caucus raised $250,000 at a Washington dinner and began preparations for staffing the caucus full-time. Every major 1972 Democratic Presidential contender appeared at the dinner and major corporations including A & P. General Motors, Gulf Oil, and the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company purchased tables at $2,400 each.

Democratic and Republican Party Caucuses

In Congress, both the Democrats and the Republicans have relied periodically on caucuses of party members to adopt party positions on legislation, elect party leaders, approve committee assignments, and on rare occasions to discipline party members. While House Democrats use the term "party caucus," Republicans in both houses and Senate Democrats refer to call their party caucus a "conference." After decades of relative inactivity during much of the 20th century, party caucuses

emerged in the late 1960's as important bodies. Such modern caucuses, for example, currently meet regularly to debate substantive and procedural issues.

Woodrow Wilson wrote in 1883 that there existed a well-known Congressional device long ago invented and applied for the special purpose of keeping the majority and the minority compact "together along party lines". He stated that in Congress the "legislative caucus" has played nearly as important a role as the standing committees. Its essential role, according to Wilson, was to provide the members with an opportunity to confer with each other on issues.

Modernly, beginning in 1965 the Republican Party Conference began to discuss party policy in anticipation of floor debate on major issues while the Democrats commenced such discussions in their party caucus in 1969.

House Democratic Study Group

In the late 1950's liberal Democrats in the House of Representatives formed the Democratic Study Group (DSG) in order to counter-act the perceived constitutional bias of procedures in the House.

The Democratic Study Group is a voluntary group of Democrats in the House of Representatives

with a membership roster, elected leaders, permanent staff, and a set of regularized procedures for meeting and arriving at various decisions. Membership in the DSG has ranged between 115 and 170 during the years 1958 to 1970. Reportedly, part of the reason for large membership in this group is that the DSG prepares information sheets on important issues before the House, and only members receive these information sheets. Active members of the DSG are required to pay dues.

The Democratic Study Group is headed by an elected chairman and executive committee who meet regularly to exchange information and plan strategy on important legislative matters. The executive committee was comprised of eight members in 1959 and of 15 members in 1970. Because of its size, smaller informal groups of this committee work with the
chairman to establish agendas and discuss issues. Policy decisions, however, are the responsibility of the full membership such decisions are made at full membership meetings. The DSG is also organized into task forces in order to complement the work of the Democratic majority on regular House committees. During the 91st Congress, there were 11 such task forces.

In practice, nearly all of the DSG's activities are generated and executed by the staff, which has assumed an independent leadership

role in recent years. The DSG staff ordinarily consists of approximately 12 people, four of whom engage in legislative research. The institutionalization of the DSG permits the staff director to initiate and oversee DSG operations.

While DSG members are, on most issues, quite united and constitute a formidable bloc and have increased their cohesion over time relative to that of the Southern Democrats and the Republicans, some of the DSG programs succeed--such as the civil rights effort--while others fail. Several factors have worked against success, including: limited staff resources, 2) low participation levels by task force members other than the chairman, 3) divisions within task forces when the subject matter is outside traditional social and economic concerns, and 4) existence of task forces on subjects where legislative interest is lacking. During the 91st Congress, for example, the issue of whether to remain or withdraw from the war in Indochina was divisive.

The DSG provides its members with services such as the following:
1) legislative information sheets.
2) sample letters to constituents on current issues and bibliographies of studies done on such topics, campaign services to members and candidates for Republican seats, including:
a) financial contributions.
b)research reports on current issues.
reports on the legislative record of their

incumbent opponent,
d) holding seminars to give advice on campaign techniques, and at the beginning of each Congress, holding
meetings for staffing, obtaining desirable committee assignments, and using Library of Congress resources.

Interviews with the members indicate they appreciate the above services and in many cases provide the incentive for joining the Democratic Study Group. The DSG has also tried to increase voter turnout among its members through the establishment of a whip system that includes phone calls by secretaries to members who are interested in particular issues. Other DSG activities, fall into four classes: 1) agenda setting, 2) parliamentary strategy, 3) coordination of outside groups, and 4) institutional change.

The DSG has an effective information gathering and dissemination system but little political clout, while lobbies sometimes can provide the latter but often are in need of a targeted audience and a general overall strategy. The cooperation of the DSG and some interests has worked well with civil rights legislation and securing full funding for education programs.

In an effort to improve its bargaining position within the House Democratic Party, the DSG has sought to modify rules and practices largely

responsible for the perceived unresponsiveness of party leaders. The DSG has worked on this within the Democratic Caucus and, when necessary, the House.

California Rural Caucus

In 1978, 18 of the 80 members of the Assembly formed the Rural Caucus to represent the interests of the rural areas of California. The first chairman was Gordon Duffy (Rep - Hanford). The caucus has discussed problems facing rural schools, vocational agriculture, farm- land preservation, and the operation of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board. One of the main problems faced by the caucus was finding time to meet in the hectic weeks prior to the Legislature's Summer recess in 1978. Two members of the caucus, John Thurman (Dem -Modesto) and Richard Lehman (Dem - Fresno) have stated that the organization has teen quite beneficial and effective in combating the urban majority. Assemblyman Duffy said that because of the influence of the Rural Caucus, urban colleagues are beginning to concede that the rural areas do have some legitimate problems that have not been getting enough attention. As a means of warning each other about legislation they consider harmful to rural counties, the caucus has established a hotline whereby if one member comes across a "bad bill" he or she calls the chairman, who in turn, informs the other caucus members.

Comments on Special Interest Caucuses

As noted earlier, there are over 40 special interest caucuses in Congress. There are, for example, legislative caucuses for women, blacks, Hispanics, the Irish, Vietnam Veterans, urban areas, suburban areas, rural areas, the Northeast, the Midwest, steel, shipyards, solar energy, textiles, mushrooms, coal, exports, environmentalism, gas, and tourism.

The large growth in recent years of these special interest caucuses has caused some observers to believe that they contribute the fragmentation of Congress similar to the belief that single issue lobbies are threatening political party unity. Others, such as Congressman Tom Daschle of South Dakota, concede this possibility but contend that since the existing committee system does not bring people together with the same interests or experience on particular issues; each caucus permits a group of members to draft one piece of legislation rather than numerous competing ones. The formulation of these caucuses, therefore, indicates that the traditional congressional caucus.

CHAPTER 3

THE CHICANO CAUCUS

Introduction

The Chicano Caucus is a group of Chicano legislators in the California Legislature who organized themselves into a unit in January 1973 to represent what they perceive are the interests of Chicanos an other Spanish surnamed persons in the state. The activities of the caucus are directed by a chairman selected from among the members to serve a one year term, on a rotating basis.

Upon establishment, the Chicano Caucus consisted of the five Chicano legislators in the Legislature--all Democratic Assemblymen:
Alex Garcia from Los Angeles, Peter Chacon from San Diego, Richard Alatorre from Los Angeles, Raymond Gonzales from Bakersfield, and Joseph Montoya from La Puente. Richard Alatorre was selected the first chairman of the Chicano Caucus. Of the membership of the caucus, Alex Garcia was the first to be elected to the Assembly in 1968 followed by Peter Chacon in 1970 and Richard Alatorre, Raymond Gonzales, and Joseph Montoya in 1972.

In 1974, Art Torres, a Democrat from Los Angeles, was elected to the Assembly. Also in 1974, Raymond Gonzales, who had represented Kern County between 1970-7l, was defeated at the poll; in the 1974
general election. In a special election in 1974, Ruben Avala, a Democrat from San Bernardino, was elected to the Senate and in the 1974 general election Alex Garcia moved from the Assembly to the

1978, Joseph Montoya moved from the Assembly to the Senate.

Therefore, between the establishment of the Chicano Caucus in 1973 and the present (1979), the make-up of this group has changed from five Assembly Members to three Assembly Members and three senators.

Background

Prior to 1972, there had been only one or two Chicano legislators serving in Sacramento at one time. During the 1960's, for example, although three Chicanos served in the Legislature, generally only one Chicano legislator served at one time--except during the years 1962 to 1964. In 1962, John Moreno was elected to represent the 51st Assembly District and served only one term before he was defeated in the 1964 election. Philip Soto was also elected to the Assembly in 1962, was reelected in 1964 and served until 1966. As noted earlier Alex Garcia was first elected in 1968. Therefore, the formation of a Chicano legislative caucus prior to 1973 was impractical due to the lack of members or potential members. It should be noted that in California all of the Chicano legislators have been elected as Democrats. I is believed by this thesis writer that this has occurred principally because the Democratic Party in the state has made more efforts to recruit

Mexican Americans for its membership and traditiona11y has stood for the types of issues which generally poorer people, including this group, have considered top priorities (e.g., more jobs, equal education, and affordable housing). Currently, most Chicanos in California who are registered to vote are registered as Democrats.

At the present time, all of the caucus members represent districts located in Southern California. The district represented by Richard Alatorre consists of the Mexican American barrio known as East Los Angeles. Peter Chacon's district lies in San Diego and contains large concentrations of minorities. Art Torres represents a district that consists of downtown Los Angeles, the City of Commerce, and part of Monterey Park. Ruben Ayala represents a Senate district that includes San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties. Alex Garcia represents a district in Los Angeles that includes the East Los Angeles barrio and Joseph Montoya also represents a Senate district contained within Los Angeles County.

Why and How Formed

The Chicano Caucus was formed in 1973 as a result of concern that the existing legislative structures would not adequately protecting the interests of Chicanos and other Spanish surnamed persons in California. The caucus members I have interviewed said that several members had thought about the concept of a legislative caucus, based on

the example of the Black Caucus of the California Legislature, and decided it could help to better serve the Spanish surnamed population of the state. Before each legislative session commences, the caucus members meet and discuss a legislative agenda to work on during the year.

Since the group is very small in, number each member in a sense becomes a task force on a particular issue. In past years such issues have been bilingual education, housing, and health services. During the Session, the caucus generally meets once a week during the noon hour, although a few breakfast meetings are also held.

Purposes and Functions

The Chicano Caucus has established for itself several purposes and functions. One purpose and related function is to permit group discussion and action on legislation and other public policies that have a significant impact on Chicanos and Spanish surnamed person generally in California. Examples of these public policies are quality bilingual instruction in public schools and minority admissions to institutions of higher learning. Another purpose of the caucus is to hear particular problems of Spanish surnamed individuals or groups.

For example, the caucus has heard from students, poor people, and small business operators. In these cases, the function of the caucus is to attempt to resolve their problems whenever possible or, at least, to refer them to entities that may be able to provide the assistance.

Another purpose of the Chicano Caucus is to inspire and encourage Mexican Americans to organize and work to elect local and regional candidates. In 1973, for example, Richard Alatorre—then chairman of he caucus—urged Chicanos at a Woodland meeting to exercise their political voting rights at all levels of government in the state; in city, school board, county, and state elections. The caucus also exists to develop Chicano unity on important public policy issues affecting the Chicano people. As an organization which, when organized, consisted of a small minority of the Assembly membership and having no Senate representation, the group early realized that their voices would be more effective if it represented a single position. In 1973, for example, the caucus sponsored legislation that sought to require state and local governments to hire Spanish speaking employees to work in agencies that serve a large percentage of Spanish surnamed persons. The members of the caucus recognize, however, that the caucus is not united on every legislative issue. Richard Alatorre said in 1973 that colleagues from more conservative districts may not be able to support certain legislative bills. In such cases, he

indicated, the caucus might not take a formal in order to avoid creating political liabilities.

Caucus appears to be discussion and agreement as to who will attempt to move up to Senate seats among the caucus members. Such an agreement apparently occurred in 1974 when Alex Garcia ran for the Senate seat without challenge from Richard Alatorre who represented the other half of the Senate district. Without the existence of the caucus, these two Chicano candidates might have bitterly opposed each other, split the Democratic and Chicano votes, and permitted a Republican candidate to win the election. Indeed, in years prior a scenario similar to this occurred in 1971 when Democrat Richard Alatorre was opposed by a La Raza Unida candidate, Raul Ruiz, which so split the Chicano vote that the Republican candidate, Bill Brophy, won the election in an otherwise Democratic district.

Reasons for Increase in Representation

Why did the voters in 1972 increase the number of Chicanos in the California Legislature by 150 percent (from 2 to 5 Assemblymen)Herman Sillas, the present U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of California wrote in 1973 that in his opinion this occurred because of four basic reasons.10 One reason was that between 1969 and 1972,President Richard Nixon had appointed some California Mexican Americans to highly visible national positions, such as U.S. Treasurer and the Director of

the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), which suggested to California voters that a person with a Spanish surname is capable of handling affairs of state. Secondly, he noted that the Democratic reforms, instituted for the 1972 Presidential Election, had brought hundreds of Mexican Americans into the inner circles of politics, which gave them savvy and an appetite for more. Thirdly, he stated that the effort of the United Farm Workers (UFW) union, in working to defeat the anti-UFIq initiative Proposition 22, had involved a large push to register Chicanos to vote and to get them to the polls on election day.

Finally, he added, that the efforts of the minority party candidates, running on the La Raza Unida ticket, had significantly increased the political awareness of Chicanos in the barrios. In light of the aforesaid reasons, Herman Sillas concluded that prior to the 1972 elections Chicanos had obtained from the Republican Administration visibility and credibility while obtaining from the

Democratic Party access to a major political organization and the money necessary to finance serious legislative campaigns. Furthermore, he analyzed, the efforts of the UFW and the La Raza Unida Party had served to increase political awareness of Mexican Americans. The combination of these factors contributed to moving this group a step closer to the state's political mainstream by increasing election participation and political

representation. Another possible factor was that 1972 was a good year for Democratic candidates to run for Assembly seats. Indeed, in the 1972 general election Democrats made a net gain of eight seats from the Republicans. The Democratic make-up of the Assembly rose from 43 to 51 Democrats.12 The 1972 general election was also the year that Republican Richard Nixon defeated Democrat George McGovern for the Presidential race in 49 out of 5O states, including California. It is interesting to note that the "coattails effect" which is generally believed by political scientists to carry minor party candidates on to victory along with the major party standard bearer—usually the President—did not operate in the 1972 Assembly races. In the Senate, however, the Republicans did gain one net seat over the Democrats, going from 19 to 20 Republican Senators. In 1973, after the Legislature and the Governor arrived at an impasse on the reapportionment of the state legislative districts, the California Supreme Court reapportioned these districts.l4 The Court assigned the reapportionment task to a group of "reapportionment masters" who drew the district boundaries and the Court, after review, approved these boundaries. The new legislative districts were drawn so that one Senate district would likely elect a Chicano, since it contained slightly over 50 percent Spanish surnamed population within its boundaries.

Role of Caucus in the Legislature

The role of the Chicano Caucus in the Legislature is to inform their legislative colleagues on issues of importance to the Spanish surnamed population of

the state and to act to protect those perceived interests in legislative deliberations. The legislative deliberation may take place at the subcommittee, committee, floor, and Assembly-Senate conference committee levels. The issue being considered may be a legislative bill, an item in the budget, or the operation of a state or local agency.

The role of this caucus is essentially one of a special interest group. It performs this role because the Spanish surnamed population of the state is numerically under represented in the Legislature, furthermore, no specific lobbying organization in Sacramento performs this function. In 1976, the caucus discussed the possibility of sponsoring a series of fund raisers to provide start-up funds for a professional lobbying organization to represent Chicano people before the California Legislature. The thinking was that since over 600 private interests were represented before the Legislature including private businesses, labor unions, schools, cities, government workers, etc., that the Spanish surname population which includes a large proportion of economically disadvantaged persons would also benefit 'row political' lobbying efforts. To date, this idea has not been acted upon.

Caucus Activities Reported by the Press

The following are examples of the types of activities the caucus has elected to undertake that have been reported in one newspaper: In 1974, the five Assembly members of the caucus, in endorsing Assembly Speaker Bob Moretti's candidacy for Governor, praised the Speaker's support of bilingual education, unemployment insurance for since Spanish surnamed persons constitute approximately 16 percent of the population of California, this group's proportional representation in the Legislature would be 13 Assembly Members (16 percent of all 80 Assembly Members) and 6 Senators (16 percent of all 40 Senators! As noted earlier, there are three Chicano Assembly Members and three Chicano Senators currently elected to serve in the California Legislature. The farm workers, and legislation that has been helpful to all citizens of the state. The only other Mexican American in the Legislature, Senator Ruben Ayala, decided to remain neutral in the gubernatorial race prior to the primary. Also in 1974, the caucus sent a letter of protest to the Board of Trustees of a West Sacramento School District over the board's method of evaluating the performance of its Mexican American district superintendent. The board had sent out questionnaires regarding the superintendent's performance to all district employees and invited comments from the public. An aid to one of the caucus members pointedly asked how a janitor could be expected to know the

competence level of a superintendent. The caucus said it sent the letter out of concern that the questionnaire was merely the justification for an intent to discriminatorily fire the superintendent.

On May 5, 1979, President Carter met with the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature to discuss various issues of concern to Mexican Americans including appointment of a Mexican American ambassador to Mexico, the rights of undocumented workers or illegal aliens, and the use of foreign nationals as strikebreakers during a lettuce strike in the state.

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Survey of Attitudes on Legislative Issues

In the Spring of 1973, the members of the Chicano Caucus were asked by this thesis writer about their attitudes on several legislative issues. The text of the questions asked and a summary response of each question are found in Appendices B and C. The highlights of the survey responses are that the caucus members agreed: 1) a reapportionment plan for legislative districts should include a district that is predominantly Chicano in population, 2) campaign spending levels are too high in California, 3) political parties. In the state are neither too weak nor too strong, 4) farm workers should be covered with unemployment insurance, 5) many Spanish surname children are in need of relevant and quality education, and 6) the Spanish surname population generally needs more political representation. The survey also pointed out that there was disagreement among the members on the merits of a state comprehensive health plan and on a proposal to place strict controls on lobbyist activities. In regards to the areas of agreement, at least one Democratic reapportionment plan in 1973--that of Senator Dymally had included a Senatorial district where the majority population was Spanish surname.

Another Senate plan had not so included a Chicano district. After the Legislature and the Governor failed to agree upon a reapportionment

plan, the California Supreme Court appointed a group of “reapportionment masters” to accomplish this task; their plan, which was approved by the Court, included a Senate district with a Spanish surname majority population. The member’s sentiments about the level of campaign spending seems to be shared by many legislators and challengers, and various proposals have been considered to deal with this issue but no proposal to date has found general acceptance. The members’ statement about the strength of political parties in the state is somewhat different from most political science texts which generally that political parties in California are very weak.

The members’ opinion on extending unemployment insurance to arm workers was shared by the majority of the Legislature since at least 1972, although vetoed by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1972, 1973,and 1974. In 1975, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., signed the bill extending such worker’s insurance. The members, in agreeing that one of the foremost needs of the Chicano community is relevant and quality education for its children, referred to the necessity for bilingual education for many children why speak only Spanish in the home and to concerns over the quality of instruction provided in low wealth school districts. The members’ concern over a lack of political representation in the state resulted in their formation of the caucus as an attempt to fill part of this perceived need.

In regards to the areas of disagreement among the members, two members favored a legislative proposal to establish a state comprehensive health plan, similar in concept to national health insurance. The other members were undecided about the merits of the health plan proposal due to unfamiliarity with its potential impacts including cost considerations. The caucus members were also divided on the merits of a proposal by one of their own members—Raymond Gonzales—to require a detailed monthly disclosure of moneys expended by lobbyists on each member for food and drinks, and to prohibit lobbyists from making campaign contributions. The members generally agreed with the disclosure requirement but felt the system of required receipts was cumbersome. Several said that prohibiting lobbyists from making campaign contributions might not solve the influence of lobbyists on the Legislature and one said that lobbyists have a right to make campaign contributions. In 1974, the voters of the state approved Proposition 9 which established lobbyist disclosure requirements and a prohibition on lobbyists from making campaign contributions. A 1979 court decision has struck the prohibition against lobbyists making campaign contributions retained the disclosure requirements.

In summary, most caucus Members agreed on most of the issues polled. While this fact does not

necessarily mean that the range of topics chosen is representative of all legislative issues considered in a legislative session, at least across an arbitrary range of topics chosen this group appears to be generally quite cohesive.

Composition of the Districts

This section identifies and compares the voter registration and political party make-up as well as the percentage of Spanish surnamed population in each district that elected a Chicano Caucus member in the years 1972 and 1978. As can be seen in Table 1, in 1972 there existed large differences in the number of registered voters in each district, all of the districts had Democratic Party majorities, and none of the districts consisted of a Spanish surname population majority. As can be seen in Table 2, in 1978 there continued to exist large variations in the number of registered voters in each district—even when taking into account that three districts are Assembly Districts and three are Senate Districts.21 Table 2 further shows that in 1978 all of the districts included a high proportion of Democrats and in two of the districts Spanish surname persons constitute a majority of the voting age population. Another district nearly has such a majority.

Comment on the Caucus

Although the members of the Chicano Caucus strive to serve the Spanish surname population of the state, this is not the only role these members have in the Legislature. Their primary individual role is to serve their district constituents. Why have these members taken on the additional responsibilities of serving people outside their district boundaries? The next chapter is designed to shed some light on this question.

CHAPTER 4

THE CLIENT GROUP OF THE CHICANO CAUCUS: SPANISH SURNAMED PERSONS IN CALIFORNIA; SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Introduction

The need for a Chicano Caucus in the California State Legislature might better be understood by noting selected socio-economic conditions and cultural characteristics of the Spanish surname population the state. The primary indicators noted in this chapter are population, unemployment rate, annual family income, educational attainment level, voting registration and voter turnout rates, and immigrant status.

Population

Based on a U.S. Census Bureau population sample, the California Department of Finance estimated that the 1976 population in California of Spanish origin constituted 15.8 percent of the total state population--3,409,900 of 2l,522,000 persons. Most of the Spanish surname population in California lives in the urban areas of the southern part of the state.

Rate of Unemployment

In 1970, the unemployment rate of the Spanish surname labor force in California was 7.9 percent while the state's overall unemployment rate was 6.3 percent, or 25 percent lower.2 In one Mexican American population center, East Los Angeles, one nonprofit organization estimated that the unemployment rate in that area in 1973 was approximately 17 percent.

Income and Education

In 1970, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the 1969 median annual income of Spanish surname families in California was $8,791 while the overall median annual income of families in the state was $10,732.4 Thus, most Spanish surname families had 18 percent less annual income than most families in the state. Stated another way, most Spanish surname families had only four-

fifths the annual income of most other families in the state. In 1960, the median years of school completed by Spanish sur-named persons 25 years of age and older living in California was 8.6 years, while that of Anglo persons was 10.6 years.5 In 1970, the median years of school completed by Spanish surnamed persons 25 years and older living in California had risen to 10.6 years while the overall median had risen to 12.4 years.6 Interestingly, significant differences in educational attainment levels exist between geographical areas of the state. For example, in San Diego County in 1970 while 38.9 percent of all Spanish surnamed persons 25 years and older had completed high school, the high school completion rates for this population in Los Angeles County and Alameda County were 35.0 percent and 46.7 percent, respectively.

Mexican American students are dramatically underrepresented at California's institutions of higher learning. Mexican Americans in 1973, while constituting approximately 16 percent of the state's population, represented only 3.2.percent of the students at the University of California, 5.4 percent of the students at the state universities and colleges, and 8.0 percent of those at the community colleges. As a result, only 2.6 percent of the state's teachers in 1973 there Mexican Americans.

While this thesis writer did not find more recent college enrollment figures exclusively for California, the U.S. figures are believed to be indicative of such changes. Between 1972 and 1976, college enrollment of Spanish origin students in the United States increased 76 percent while the increase for all other students was 18 percent during this period. Between 1976 and 1978, the college enrollment trend was reversed for both Spanish origin students and all other students; college enrollments of Spanish origin students decreased by 12 percent while the rate of decrease for all other students was 1 percent.

This educational data shows that Mexican Americans in California 1) have not attained the same level of formal education as the general population of the state, and 2) made very significant strides between 1972 and 1976 but since 1976 the slide in college enrollments is significantly more pronounced among this group than among all other students.

VOTING

In regards to voter participation rates by Mexican Americans in California, a review of the 1964 Presidential general election involving President Lyndon Johnson and U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater is considered indicative of low registration and voting rates. In that election, 79.5 percent of the state's voting age population was

registered to vote while only 55.9 percent of the Mexican American population eligible to vote and living in Los Angeles County was registered to vote. Also in this election, while the percentage of all persons voting in relation to the voting age population was 70.3 percent state-wide, the percentage was only 49.9 percent for Mexican Americans living in Los Angeles County.

The following are reasons why Mexican Americans have not participated to a larger extent in elections in California:

1)cultural suspicions by naturalized citizens about the workings of politics, since they are familiar with the one-party, controlled system in Mexico;

2) a lack of confidence or ability by many persons in using written English which until recently was required in order to vote.

3) gerrymandering of election districts by governing boards to neutralize the impact of bloc voting by this group;

4) low educational and economic attainment by the people; People of low educational and economic attainment tend to be lead active politically regardless of ethnicity. With low economic attainment it is also difficult to raise sufficient campaign funds among this group;

5) disunity of leadership;

6) lack of experience and leadership opportunities in various elected posts;

7) maintenance of a rural outlook by many of those who have moved to cities from rural areas; The rural outlook for the poor is usually very limited and apprehensive;

8) a low naturalization rate among the foreign born. Between 1954 and 1966, only between 2.4 percent and 5.0 percent of the Mexican immigrants who became eligible for citizenship for the first time actually became naturalized citizens at this opportunity. Other immigrant groups during this period were be-coming naturalized, on the 1st year of opportunity at rates from 26.0 percent to 35.5 percent, depending upon the year. Mexican emigrants to the United States who became U.S. citizens remain residents of the U.S. a long time before becoming naturalized. For example, 79 percent of the Mexican aliens who were naturalized in 1966 had resided in this country 10 years or more, as against 34 percent among all aliens acquiring citizenship in that year.15

Immigrant Status

Mexican Americans may be the oldest and the newest minority immigrant in California. When they arrived and settled from the Old World they were both a population minority and immigrants to the Indian residents, and currently they also

constitute a population minority which has a sizeable immigrant component.

The pattern of emigration from Mexico to the United States is indicative of immigration to California because generally anywhere between one-third and one-half of Mexican immigrants to the United States make California their new home. It is interesting to note that during the 1920's peak migration period, Mexican literature revealed concern that Mexico was losing too many of her energetic, skilled, and ambitious people to the United States while in the United States concern over the volume of this immigration led to vigorous Congressional debate regarding extending the quota system to Mexicans and establishing stricter administrative controls. During the late 1960's and the 1970's, there has also been considerable attention focused on the issue of illegal or undocumented immigrants to the United States from Mexico. Principally this attention has been over whether these persons take jobs from U.S. citizens and legal residents.

During the 196O's and early 1970's, the average annual number of legal immigrants to the United States from Mexico was approximately 50,000 persons. In 1976, the Congress enacted Public Law 94-571, a statute to limit legal annual immigration at 20,000 persons from any one country. This law has had the effect of denying entrance to a considerable number of Mexicans who desire to

migrate to the United States and, due to the economic disparities between the countries, has resulted in many such persons entering and staying in the U.S. illegally. Of the estimated 5 million illegal aliens, or undocumented workers in the United States from Mexico, it is estimated that some whatsoever l million currently reside in California.

In summary, a sizeable foreign born population in the state which is either slow to naturalize—in the case of legal immigrants—or which is prohibited from gaining legal status and citizenship contributes to the low voter registration and voter turnout rates of Chicanos. This fact, in turn, reduces the political effect of this group on state policies.

Assimilation in the Larger Society

A factor often not considered in assessing how the Chicano community votes on issues is the extent to which this group has structural ties to the dominant society. In Los Angeles County in 1963, for example, a sampling of marriage licenses disclosed that slightly over 25 percent of Mexican American individuals married outside their ethnic group. This sample survey found that Mexican American women married outside their ethnic group at the rate of 27 percent while men did so at the rate of 94 percent and that these rates of exogamous marriages increase the further one was

from immigrant status. The data found that Mexican Americans who were born in the U.S. of U.S.-born parents were approximately twice as likely as foreign-born Mexican Americans to marry outside their ethnic group. Whether these rates apply to the state as a whole is unknown, however.

CHAPTER 5

SYSTEM EFFECTS ON THE CHICANO CAUCUS

Introduction

This chapter notes significant current political factors in California that affect the participation of Chicanos in legislative and elected executive positions at the state level. The factors discussed include: 1) the importance of money and volunteers in election campaigns, 2) the effect of reapportionment on representation, 3) the role of political parties, 4) the importance of California's diversified economic base, 5) the role and influence of lobbyists, and 6) the importance of the legislative structure.

Money and Volunteers

The voice of money in California politics is loud and clear. In 1972, the median campaign cost in the general election for Assembly candidates was $17,209.1 In that election, the average amount

spent by spinners for Assembly seats wad $27,580. In 1970, Governor Reagan's re-election cost for the primary and general election was $3.5 million.

1972 general election by type of election district and other variables. Moreover, since 1972 campaign costs have escalated significantly.

Since California has weak political parties, the result has been candidate-focused politics. In statewide races, professional agencies have become prominent in their ability to package and sell the candidate to the public. In legislative races, however, the professional campaign agencies do not generally run the campaigns. Viable legislative candidates do, however, generally make extensive use of campaign-experienced private firms which 1) produce and send to voters mass-mailings of candidates' literature, 2) conduct voter attitudinal polls, and 3) analyze the voting behavior of people in specific geographical areas.4) This "professional effort" is then combined with the grass roots efforts directed by the candidate or a trusted aid with support of hundreds of workers who go from door to door, register voters, and get out the vote. Nearly all of these latter activities are conducted by amateurs who volunteer their services on a non-paid, part-time basis.

A study of the effect of money on Assembly races by Edward Charles Olson of UC Davis, suggests that the principal electoral advantage of

incumbency in Assembly contests was superior access to campaign funds. In fact, incumbents tend to have campaign chests which are approximately three times larger than those of challengers. Due to this imbalance, otherwise qualified challengers may be inhibited from running in a campaign, conducting a serious campaign, or unable to secure enough funds to pay for the essential costs of effective campaigning. Furthermore, those candidates with small campaign accounts have the additional burden of devoting a larger share of their efforts to raising funds which detracts from efforts to generate mass publicity. Without the necessary funds, the candidate will not be viable and similarly without the necessary time to devote to generating publicity the candidate will not be viable. Also, due to the perceived gap in fund-raising between an incumbent and a challenger, the challenger is strongly tempted to rely on large contributors who may view their contributions more as an investment than a contribution. In other words, the large contributors may expect specific returns on their investment, i.e., favorable policy decisions.

Reapportionment

Under the California Constitution, the Legislature must reap-portion itself during the regular session following the federal decennial census. Former Assembly Speaker Jess Unruh, who was prominent

in the Assembly when the 1960's redistricting took place has stated:

"Reapportionments are designed by incumbents for incumbents, as a service to incumbents."

Jess Unruh stated that the following order of priorities was used to reapportion legislative districts in California: first, the members make an agreement to protect themselves; secondly, the leadership party attempts to give their party whatever advantage there can be made; and thirdly, the members look at other groups who manage to place the most pressure on them.

In California, the courts have accomplished what the Legislature and the Governor have failed to do, that is, to establish a more equal scheme of representation, the last time this occurred was when the California Supreme Court appointed "reapportionment masters" who redrew the district boundaries in 1973 and the Court subsequently approved their work.

Political Parties

California is considered to have weak political parties. Perhaps the most important reason for this

is that the population of California is largely composed of newcomers from other states. More people move to California from other states yearly than immigrants arrive in the entire United States. In 1970, almost 60 percent of California's residents were born outside the state.13 As Carey McWilliams said, "Political machines simply cannot function with efficiency in areas largely made of newcomers and strangers. Furthermore, political party discipline and its importance is reduced by the existence of the initiative, referendum, and recall which enable California's voters to directly enact laws. While political parties, in California are weak in comparison to many other large industrialized states, the party label of either Democrat or Republican is critical in partisan campaigns. During the last 45 years, for example, only two minor party candidates have won a seat in the State Legislature. In a few instances, however, a third party candidate has pulled sufficient votes from a Democratic Party.

A Economic Base

The California economic base is highly diversified with major sectors consisting of the aerospace and computer industries, head-quarters for major banking institutions, a leading state of wood products, agricultural production, processing, and exporting, as well as major business interests in film-making, clothes apparel, and oil extraction.

Politically, this diversified economic base permits or enables competition for public policy favors. In states where a single economic interest is dominant, such as copper at one time in Montana, there is little or no room to bargain politically the outcome of governmental policy issues.

Lobbying

California legislators and their staffs interact with at least 600 registered lobbyists in Sacramento whose primary purpose is to represent their clients' interests on policy issues. Every major economic sector, employee group, political subdivision of the state, and profession has contracted with one or more lobbyists to represent them in Sacramento.

Until the passage of Proposition 9 in 1974, lobbyists not only rewarded legislators who they perceived as "friendly" with campaign contributions but also spent much of their time wining and dining the Members in Sacramento restaurants and bars. During the first nine months after Proposition 9 went into effect, there was very little wining and dining of lawmakers by lobbyists due to the strict spending limits established--$10 maximum per month. also, direct campaign contributions from the lobbyists themselves were prohibited, but nothing prevented the lobbyists' employers to make such contributions— which resulted. A recent court ruling (in 1979) has kept

the monthly expenditure limit of $10 on lobbyists for entertaining public officials but has stricken the prohibition against lobbyists directly making campaign contributions.

As a rule, experienced and more influential lobbyists do not spend a great deal of time with freshmen legislators, especially freshmen Assembly members. These lobbyists tend to concentrate most of their attention on party leaders, powerful senior members, and committee chairmen since these individuals, for the most part, run the Legislature and determine policy outcomes.

Legislative Structure

California's legislature is nationally ranked first in professionalism and effectiveness largely as a result of its full-time operation and the availability of substantial staff to aid them in investigating and acting on public issues.

In the Assembly, the leadership consists of the Speaker, the Speaker pro tempore, the majority and minority floor leader and the standing committee chairmen. Legislative power, however, tends to be concentrated in the hands of the Speaker, and he can dominate the affairs of the Assembly. The contest for Speaker, selected by a majority of all the Assembly members, is won by the legislator who is able to bring together at least

41 members as supporters from one or both parties and without regard to legislative seniority or prior position. The Speaker is responsible for appointing the committee chairmen add committee members, as well as assigning legislative proposals to committees.

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In the Senate, there is no primary leader as found in the Assembly. The leadership of the Senate consists of the five member Senate Rules Committee, the majority and minority floor leader, and standing committee chairmen. The entire Senate selects the members of the Senate Rules Committee, including the President Pro Tempore who serves as the chairman. Through tradition, Senate Rules is composed of three members from the majority party and two members from the minority party. Senate Rules appoints the committee chairmen and committee members, as

well as assigns bills to committees. The standing committees of the Senate, especially the chairmen, generally decide the fate of public policy issues.

In the California Legislature, perhaps more so than in other state legislatures, committee chairmen have considerable power because they control significant resources. Such resources include committee staff and budgets, the publicity and political values of holding public hearings on bills or important state issues, and the ability to conduct research. Committees are major sources of policy innovation and their chairmen are central figures in this process.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

This paper has noted that the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature was formed to serve various functions including discussing and acting on issues of importance to the Spanish surname communities, being available to listen, provide advice, and sometimes acting on behalf of local groups and individuals from these communities, to actively encourage Spanish surname persons to participate in the political process, and to serve as a symbol of hope to the Spanish surname community that participation in the state's political system is possible to this community.

This final chapter compares the Chicano Caucus to other legislative caucuses described earlier in this paper and identifies factors that help or hinder the ability of the caucus to represent its client group. The paper then states how this caucus fits into the state's governmental system and notes its perceived effect on politics and governmental decision-making in the state. Finally, this chapter considers the possible role and effect this caucus may have in the future of California.

Comparisons to Other Caucuses

In comparing the Chicano Caucus to the Democratic and Republican Party caucuses, or "conferences," in the U.S. Congress, both these caucuses and the Chicano Caucus discuss and adopt positions on issues prior to floor debate. Unlike the party caucuses, the Chicano Caucus does not approve committee assignments or discipline party members. The power to approve committee assignments has been traditionally a political party function.

In comparing the Chicano Caucus of the California Legislature to the Congressional Black Caucus, one finds that unlike the latter the Chicano Caucus has not: 1) sponsored a fund-raising dinner to provide full-time staff to the caucus; 2) boycotted a Governor's "State of the State" address (the counterpart of the President's State of the Union address); 3) served as an organization point for opposing some Of the chief executive officer's appointments to the Supreme Court; 4) held unofficial hearings on legislative issues; and 5) publicly informed other legislative members with sizeable minority constituents that the caucus will expose their legislative records if they vote against the interests of that minority.; Like the Congressional Black Caucus, the Chicano Caucus has: 1) issued press releases to protest specific acts which it feels are detrimental to the interests of the minority group; 2) developed legislation to protect or attempt to further the interests of the minority group; and 3) met with the

chief executive to discuss issues of concern to the minority group.

Unlike the U.S. House Democratic Study Group, the Chicano Caucus does not: 1) prepare information sheets on important issues before the legislative body (although individual members sometimes do); 2) have full-time staff to help it plan, research, and conduct its activities; 3) provide campaign services and funding to members and candidates for legislative seats; or 4) hold seminars for new members to acquaint them with desirable committee assignments and staffing resources. Like the House Democratic Study Group, the Chicano Caucus is: 1) a voluntary group of Democrats which elect its leadership; and 2) organized into task forces on issues (in the case of the Chicano Caucus it is often a task force of one member).

Unlike the Rural Caucus of the California Legislature, the Chicano Caucus may be said to primarily represent the urban areas of the state since that is where most of the Spanish surname population of the state lives. Like the Rural Caucus, the Chicano Caucus uses a hotline system whereby if one member comes across a “bad bill” he calls the chairman, who in turn, informs the other caucus members.

In an overall sense, it appears that the Chicano Caucus is quite similar in its behavior' to other legislative caucuses insofar as its functions to protect an identified interest. It meets to discuss some policy issues prior to floor debate, it meets with the executive officer of the political jurisdiction to discuss policies, it plans its course of action on some legislative issues, it protests acts which it perceives to be detrimental to its group, and it has established a warning system on legislation that it believes to be detrimental to its interests.

On the other hand, the Chicano Caucus is considerably more limited than the congressional caucuses in the range of activities it can undertake due to lack of staff to provide assistance. The Chicano Caucus has not steered a course of direct challenge to their colleagues insofar as the fit of the colleagues' voting records to their constituencies. Furthermore, the Chicano Caucus has not provided campaign services and funding to legislative candidates and incumbents. The staffing void is one which does not appear to be too difficult to fill if the members so choose. The activity of directly challenging their colleagues could be counterproductive for the caucus since unlike the Congressional Black Caucus, most do not represent "safe" ethnic or minority districts. Whether or not the caucus can and should become involved in legislative campaigns in other districts appears to depend to a considerable extent on what their party leadership is doing and agrees is

mutually beneficial. Otherwise, the fairly close working relationship between the current leadership of the Legislature and the caucus could be jeopardized. Such a rift would reduce the effectiveness of the caucus.

Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of the Caucus

By drawing from the data presented in previous chapters of this paper, this thesis writer has identified specific factors that either tend to help or hinder the effectiveness of the Chicano Caucus in serving the Spanish surnamed population of the state. Factors that tend to reduce its effectiveness are: 1) the small number of members in the Chicano Caucus group; 2) absence of a full-time staff to help plan, research, and conduct caucus activities; 3) their client population includes proportionately) more individuals without rights to political participation—due to their immigrant status; 4) their client population generally has less formal education and is economically poorer than the state's overall population— which research has found associated with lower Flit Cal participation rates; 5) their client population is more widely dispersed and structurally integrated with the dominant society in important areas of the state, which reduces the possibility of bloc voting; 6) the time demands on the caucus members required to

meet legislative responsibilities to their constituents—who elected them—are considerable; and 7) the state's voters have in recent years enacted laws through the initiative process that have the effect of placing spending limits on the Legislature and retarding the establishment of government service programs in areas of need.

Factors that tend to increase the effectiveness of the Chicano Caucus are: 1) two-thirds of its members in both the Assembly and the Senate are standing committee chairmen; 2) in the Assembly two of the members are politically fairly close to the Speaker (which provides access to the house leadership on issues outside their standing committee responsibilities); 3) three of the caucus members are former legislative staff members (Richard Alatorre and Art Torres in the Legislature, and Alex Garcia worked for Congressman Edward Roybal of Los Angeles), and thereby gained important political knowledge; 4) the general public in California has recently shown to be receptive to electing minority persons for public office, (which has meant that six instead of three Chicano legislators serve in the Legislature); and 5) the Spanish surname population is increasing somewhat faster than the rest of the state's population and it is attaining higher educational levels statewide than in previous years.

The overall effect of all the factors (on both sides of the scale) appears to be that the caucus is able to undertake and accomplish limited legislative objectives, especially in areas where the members have expertise or a committee chairmanship, but that for the most part the caucus succeeds better at "protecting" than "advancing" the interests of the Spanish surname population in the state. It is the opinion of this thesis writer that either full-time staff for the caucus or the establishment of a lobbying organization to complement the efforts of the caucus are necessary to better advance the interests of this population.

How the Caucus Fits Into the State's Governmental Process

The caucus memberships has a dual role in the political processes of the state. First, its members are an integral part of the California Legislature since they are elected representatives. Secondly, the caucus membership exists as an informal body which symbolically represents the interests of Chicanos and other Spanish sur-named persons in the state. Therefore, the members in this context have two duties but the caucus itself has only one—to serve the client population. The Chicano Caucus, to illustrate this point, if often consulted by federal, state, and local authorities when considering changes that directly affect Spanish surnamed persons in the state; each of the caucus members without the existence of the body would

probably not be contacted unless the proposed act affected his particular district.

Conclusion: Possible Future Role and Effect

The role and effect the caucus may have in the future depends upon the choices made by the majority of the state's voters, the caucus members themselves, the Spanish surnamed population of the state, the State Legislature, and possibly the State Supreme Court. The voters in California in recent years have been receptive to electing minorities and there is no indication that this attitude will change as long as interests applicable to the general population are expressed and acted on. Therefore, given the right exposure more Chicanos can be expected to be elected.

The present caucus members determine to some extent the role and effect of the Chicano Caucus in the future since they have the opportunity to encourage, recruit, and actively support Spanish sur-named candidates for local and state offices. The amount of recruitment efforts may be a key factor in whether the size and influence of the Chicano Caucus increases. Furthermore, any decision by those members elected from districts where the Chicano population is a minority to retire or run for another office will determine to some extent the size and influence of the caucus.

The Legislature also affects the amount of influence which the caucus will have in the future. Since the most important figure in the Legislature is the Assembly Speaker, the alignment of the caucus members with the victorious individual in the next Speakership contest is crucial to political good health. In the Senate, it is helpful to be close to the majority coalition. These outcomes, of course, cannot be predicted. Furthermore, the Legislature is assigned the duty of reapportioning the legislative districts after every decennial census. As noted earlier, reapportionment of districts can greatly affect the outcome of elections. If the Legislature fails reapportion the districts, the California Supreme Court can again be expected to accomplish this task.

The factor which is expected to play the largest role in determining the future effect of the Chicano Caucus is the Spanish surname population. The influence of its residency patterns, income, education, citizenship status and associated rights, as well as its political sophistication determine to a considerable extent what individuals from this group can achieve politically. The indicators suggest some setbacks but generally a slow and steady improvement.